

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KHARTO 02711 171023Z
ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T KHARTOUM 2711

EXDIS

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SUBJ: SO. AFRICA POLICY: SHABA, SOVIET/CUBAN INVOLVEMENT

REF: STATE 153145

1. WE WERE MOST INTERESTED IN AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S TELEGRAM
AND FEEL THAT HIS IDEAS MAKE A GREAT DEAL OF SENSE.

2. WHILE, AS I PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, I LOOK FORWARD TO A GENERAL
DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT NIMEIRI PRIOR TO THE CONVENING OF
THE TWO OAU CONFERENCES, I THINK HE WILL AVOID TAKING ANY
POSSIBLY CONTROVERSIAL INITIATIVES UNTIL AFTER THE CONFERENCES
ARE OVER AND HE IS FIRMLY ENSCONCED AS OAU PRESIDENT. BETWEEN
NOW AND THE JULY CONFERENCES, NIMEIRI AND HIS GOVERNMENT
WILL BE FULLY PREOCCUPIED WITH THE PHYSICAL AND SECURITY
ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETINGS. THESE REPRESENT
A TREMENDOUS CHALLENGE TO THE SUDAN'S SLENDER CAPABILITIES
OPERATING IN A HARSH PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. I BELIEVE SUDANESE
PRIMARY HOPE WILL BE TO RUN THE MEETINGS AS EFFICIENTLY AS POSSIBLE,
TO AVOID TO THE BEST OF THEIR ABILITY RANCOROUS DEBATES, AND TO
GET THE CHIEFS OF STATE AND OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS SAFELY
HOME AT THE END OF THE PROCEEDINGS.

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3. IT IS AFTER JULY WHEN I FEEL THAT A COMPREHENSIVE DIALOGUE
WITH NIMEIRI WILL PRODUCE RESULTS. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE
HE IS A DECENT, PRAGMATIC FELLOW, FULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE
FUTILITY OF ATTEMPTS TO SEEK MILITARY SOLUTIONS FOR AFRICAN
PROBLEMS. HE DOES NOT SHARE THE DOCTRINAIRE OUTLOOK OR THE
DEEP SUSPICIONS OF THE WEST HELD BY SO MANY OTHER AFRICAN

LEADERS. HE IS FULLY AWARE OF THE SOVIET/CUBAN PERIL. HE IS JUSTIFIABLY PROUD OF HIS RECORD IN HUMAN RIGHTS, AMONG THE BEST IN ALL OF AFRICA. HE WILL HAVE AN INTEREST IN MAKING HIS OAU PRESIDENCY A SUCCESS. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS THAT I STRONGLY URGE THAT THE USG TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NIMEIRI'S PRESENCE AT THE UNGA IN SEPTEMBER TO ENGAGE IN A FAR-REACHING, HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE WITH HIM.

4. I WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S SUGGESTION THAT THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL PLAY A LARGER ROLE IN PEACEKEEPING IN AFRICA. THIS PROPOSAL HAS MUCH TO COMMEND IT, BUT I IMAGINE IT WILL FACE A LOT OF RESISTANCE. AS AMBASSADOR YOUNG POINTS OUT, THE OAU HAS FAILED WOEFULLY IN ITS EFFORTS TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE CHAD, ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA, AND SHABA PROBLEMS. BUT THROUGHOUT THE OGADEN FIGHTING, ONE THING THE SOMALIS AND THE ETHIOPIANS SEEMED TO AGREE ON WAS THAT THEY DID NOT WISH TO BRING THE DISPUTE BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL. I THINK WE AND OUR FRIENDS WILL HAVE A MAJOR SELLING JOB TO GET THE AFRICANS TO AGREE ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL AS THE FINAL RESORT IN THEIR EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN PEACE ON THE CONTINENT.

5. IN ANOTHER AREA, I THINK THE USG SHOULD EXAMINE ITS OWN CAPABILITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO STABILITY ON THE CONTINENT. I THINK THE TOTAL FAILURE OF OUR EFFORTS TO ASSIST CHAD
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MILITARILY THROUGH THIRD PARTIES OVER THE PAST YEAR INDICATES THE INADEQUACY OF OUR OWN BILATERAL INSTRUMENTS. WE MOST CERTAINLY NEED A CAPABILITY TO MOVE QUICKLY WITH ECONOMIC AID, SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE, AND IN EXTREMIS A MODEST SUPPLY OF ARMS TO STRENGTHEN STABILITY IN THOSE AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE A GENUINE INTEREST IN MAINTAINING STABILITY.

6. IN CONCLUSION, I FEEL THAT THE U.S. WORKING WITH ITS FRIENDS IN AFRICA HAS A GOOD CHANCE TO PERSUADE THE AFRICANS TO GO BEYOND SLOGANS AND TO ACT AS AFRICANS TO SOLVE AFRICAN PROBLEMS. I LOOK UPON THIS, HOWEVER, AS A FAIRLY LENGTHY AND DIFFICULT PROCESS WHICH WILL REQUIRE PATIENCE, UNDERSTANDING, AND A WILLINGNESS TO DEVOTE ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL AND RESOURCES ON OUR PART. I DO NOT THINK WE SHOULD AIM FOR QUICK SOLUTIONS OR TRY TO DEVISE SOME GIMMICKS BETWEEN NOW AND THE JULY OAU MEETINGS.
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